

REMARKS

Claims 1-31 are all the claims pending in the application.

Initially, Applicants would like to thank Examiner Peter Agustin and Examiner Brian Miller for the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative during the personal interview conducted on December 13, 2005.

I. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 17, 22, 24, 25, 29 and 31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kawada et al. (JP 06-028672).

Applicants note that independent claim 17 recites that an amount of change in refractive index is less than or equal to 0.02. As discussed and agreed upon during the personal interview, Kawada et al. does not disclose, suggest or otherwise render obvious such a feature. Accordingly Applicants submit that claim 17 is patentable over Kawada, an indication of which is kindly requested.

Regarding claims 22, 24, 25, 29 and 31, Applicants note that these claims depend from claim 17 and are therefore considered patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

II. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

A. Claim 18 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawada et al. Claim 18 depends from claim 17. As noted above, Kawada fails to disclose, suggest or otherwise render obvious all of the features recited in claim 17. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 18 is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency.

B. Claims 19-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawada et al. in view of Takahashi (U.S. 5,748,601). Claims 19-21 depend from claim 17. Applicants respectfully submit that Takahashi fails to cure the deficiencies of Kawada, as discussed above, with respect to claim 17. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 19-21 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

C. Claim 23 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawada et al. in view of Hesselink et al. (U.S. 6,212,148). Claim 23 depends from claim 17. Applicants respectfully submit that Hesselink fails to cure the deficiencies of Kawada, as discussed above, with respect to claim 17. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 23 is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency.

D. Claim 26 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawada et al. in view of Yamada et al. (U.S. 5,080,947). Claim 26 depends from claim 17. Applicants respectfully submit that Yamada fails to cure the deficiencies of Kawada, as discussed above, with respect to claim 17. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 26 is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency.

E. Claim 27 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawada et al. in view of Durham (U.S. 5,532,998). Claim 27 depends from claim 17. Applicants respectfully submit that Durham fails to cure the deficiencies of Kawada, as discussed above, with respect to claim 17. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 27 is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency.

F. Claim 28 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawada et al. in view of Ishii et al. (U.S. 4,125,860). Claim 28 depends from claim 17. Applicants respectfully submit that Ishii fails to cure the deficiencies of Kawada, as discussed above, with respect to claim 17. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 28 is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency.

III. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 1-16 and 30 are allowed.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may best be resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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